



National Park Service
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Interagency News Release / Fire Update

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Aerial Burnout in Deer Cove Assists on Comb Fire

The Comb Fire, started by lightning three weeks ago, continues to benefit the ecosystem throughout the Deer Cove, Lewis Creek, and Hotel Creek drainages of Sequoia National Forest and Kings Canyon National Park. As of this morning, the fire has grown to 4,012 acres.

Much of the fire perimeter has already cooled. “Only about one hundred acres of the fire is actively burning,” said Dave Bartlett, Acting Fire Management Officer for Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. The Deer Cove and Lewis Creek Trails remain closed. These trails will be evaluated for safety before they are reopened.

The main activity yesterday was in the Deer Cove Creek drainage due to aerial burnout operations west of Stag Dome. Crews conducted these ignitions to remove vegetation along existing firelines which will prevent more fire spread on the southwest side of the fire. As expected, most of this fire is burning through ground fuels with some isolated areas of tree-torching (burning in the tops of trees). Outside the area of aerial ignition, the fire showed little movement and as a whole was “quite tame” according to Doug Stephens, Fire Behavior Analyst. There are no aerial operations planned for today.

Fire managers are concerned about smoke emissions and have been closely watching smoke movement not only in the Deer Cove area, but also on the east side in the Hotel Creek drainage above the Cedar Grove developed area.

Today, a new Fire Use Management Team assumed command of the Comb Fire. Working in partnership with Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks and Sequoia National Forest, the Great Basin Fire Use Management Team will direct operations on the fire as well as handle logistics and other support functions over the coming two weeks.

The National Park Service and USDA Forest Service are cooperatively managing the Comb Fire as a natural process, allowing it to spread to improve forest conditions. This management strategy, called “wildland fire use,” seeks to utilize the benefits of lightning-caused fires when there is low risk for people and development.

www.nps.gov/seki/fire/portal/portal.htm
or www.fs.fed.us/r5/sequoia/fire/